

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of the claims in this application:

**Listing of the Claims:**

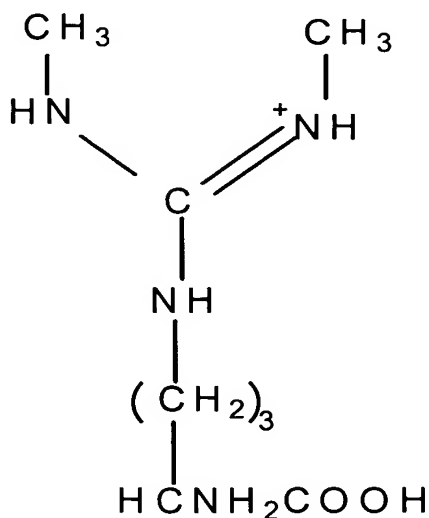
1. (Original) A peptide (S33) containing 15-16 amino acids, comprising symmetrical dimethylated arginine (sDMA), that is able to react with antibodies which are presented in sera from patients with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE).

2. (Original) The S33 peptide according to claim 1 comprising the amino acid sequence

AARGsdRGRGMGRGNIF.

3. (Currently Amended) A peptide according to ~~claims 1 and 2~~ claim 1 where the dimethylated arginine has the position 112 in the polypeptide sequence of SmD3.

4. (Currently Amended) The peptide according to ~~claims 1 or 2 or 3~~ claim 1 wherein the structure of the symmetric dimethylated arginine is



5. (Currently Amended) A method of diagnosing systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), comprising contacting sera of a patient with a composition comprising Use of a peptide (S33) containing 15-16 amino acids, comprising symmetrical dimethylated arginine (sDMA), that is able to react with antibodies that are present in sera from patients with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) for the manufacture of a composition for diagnosis of SLE patients.

6. (Currently Amended) The method Use according to claim 5, wherein the diagnosis is differential diagnosis to distinguish between SLE patients and patients with mixed connective tissue disease (MCTD).

7. (Currently Amended) The method Use according to claim 5, wherein the diagnosis is an in vitro diagnosis of SLE.

8. (Currently Amended) The method Use according to claim 5, wherein said composition is used for in vitro monitoring of the disease activity of dsDNA negative SLE patients.

9. (Currently Amended) The method Use according to claim 5, wherein said composition is used for differentiation between SLE and mixed connective tissue disease (MCTD).

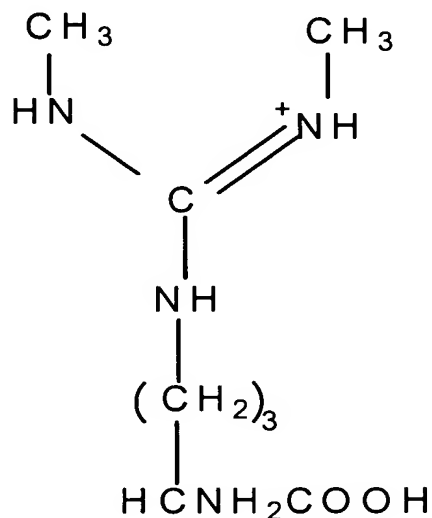
10. (Currently Amended) The method Use according to claim 5, any of claims 5 to 9, wherein said peptide comprises the amino acid sequence

AARGsdRGRGMGRGNIF<sub>2</sub>

11. (Currently Amended) The method Use according to claim 5, ~~any of claims 5 to 10~~, wherein the dimethylated arginine has the position 112 in the polypeptide sequence of SmD3.

12. (Original) Use of a multimer peptide comprising the peptide of claim 1.

13. (Currently Amended) The method Use according to claim 5, ~~any of claims 5 to 12~~, wherein the structure of the symmetric dimethylated arginine is



14. (Original) A kit for detection of antibodies, comprising a peptide (S33) of 15-16 amino acids of which one is a symmetrical dimethylated arginine (sDMA), and is able to react with said antibodies that are present in sera from patients with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE).

15. (Original) A kit according to claim 13, wherein said peptide is used for in vitro diagnosis of SLE.

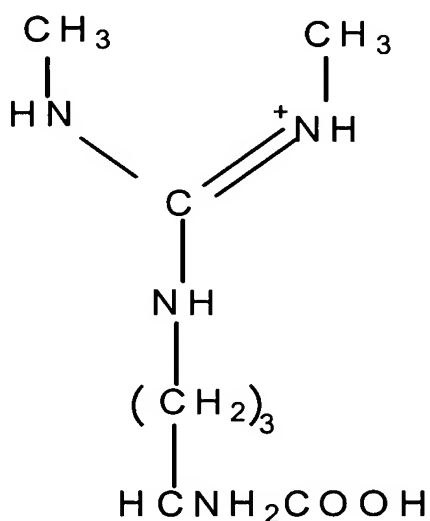
16. (Currently Amended) A kit according to claim 14, ~~wherein~~ wherein said peptide is used for differential diagnosis to distinguish between SLE and mixed connective tissue disease (MCTD).

17. (Currently Amended) A kit according to claim 14 ~~any of claims 14 to 16~~, wherein said peptide comprises the amino acid sequence

AARGsdRGRGMGRGNIF.

18. (Currently Amended) A kit ~~for use of a peptide~~ according to claim 14, ~~wherein any of claims 14 to 17 where~~ the dimethylated arginine has the position 112 in the polypeptide sequence of SmD3.

19. (Currently Amended) A kit according to claim 14 ~~any of claims 14 to 18~~, wherein the structure of the symmetrical dimethylated arginine is



20. (Currently Amended) A method for monitoring a disease activity comprising repeated testing to follow the titer of antibodies able to react with the peptide according to claim 4 ~~any of claims 1-4~~ in order to monitor the effect of treatment or the disease activity.